

D) REMARKS

§ 112

Claims 1-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶2 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Claims 1, 4-6, 14, 16, 17, 26 and 28 have been amended are believed to now comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶2. The remaining claims have been cancelled.

§ 102

Claims 1-11 and 17-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,560,548 to the current applicant ("Mueller"). Mueller recites a spring operated valve runner. Specifically, the valve runner (150) is spring biased to hold the valve runner (150) against the shoulder (35). When a hose is attached, valve runner (150) is urged upwardly. When the hose is detached, the valve runner (150) can stick in its upward position. This is believed to be caused by the degradation of the spring 163 in an aqueous environment and/or a degradation of the O-ring seal (175).

Applicant's showerheads are frequently used in the lodging industry. Obviously, wear of the spring and O-ring depends on occupancy of the property and shower usage. If shower usage is high, the spring may degrade. If shower usage is slow, the O-ring may dry out and stick.

Claims 1 and 17 have been amended to more clearly recite the claimed invention. In particular, claims 1 and 17 have been amended to recite a valve runner operable to slide downstream based upon water pressure and gravity and upstream, when urged upwardly by the attachment of a conduit. Applicant respectfully submits that his prior patent does not anticipate

claims 1 and 17 because it does not disclose a valve runner operable to slide to its downstream position (shower mode) based on gravity and water pressure.

§ 103

Claims 12-16 and claims 24-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Mueller. Claims 12-13, 15, 24-25 and 27 have been cancelled. Claims 14, 16, 26 and 28 are believed to in position for allowance as being dependent on allowable base claims.

Applicant respectfully submits that applicant's prior patent actually teaches against the claims, as amended. Mueller specifically requires a spring operated valve runner, the spring operated valve runner being operable to return the valve runner to its downstream position, the spring being required to overcome friction between the O-ring and the inner casing. The claimed invention relies on water pressure and gravity for the same task, which Mueller neither teaches nor suggests.

In summary, the applicant has provided a new, useful and non-obvious showerhead and rinsing system to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of housekeeping personnel, particularly people in the lodging industry. For his ingenuity, he is entitled to the protection of the United States patent laws. Allowance of all claims as now presented is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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